

*Jonah Thompsons*  
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LETTER

Concerning the

GLORY

AND

EXCELLENCY

OF THE

Peaceable State of the Kingdom

of the MESSIAH :

WHEREIN

The Nature of Warlike Heroism, and that of  
*Christian* Fortitude, are distinguished.

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T O T H E

R E A D E R.

**I**N a Collection of Letters, that lately came to my Hands, which seem to have been written in or about the Year 1649, I met with the following : In the Perusal whereof I found a singular Satisfaction.

*Its peculiar Sweetness to my Taste, made me desirous of communicating it to others ; as the Subject on which it treats, is of the highest Importance, viz. the Glory and Excellency of that peaceable State of the Kingdom of the Messiah, prædicted by the Prophets of old, wherein Nation shall not lift up a Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more. Micah iv. 3.*

*This Letter-Writer exquisitely distinguishes between the Nature of Warlike Heroism, and that of Christian Fortitude.*

*The former of which, he shews, has been, and even yet may be, instrumental in the Hand of God, to execute his Wrath and Vengeance upon the Wicked and Disobedient.*



*The latter is signalized by its perfect Patience : It conquers by continual Forbearance, and subdues the Malice of its Enemies by the divine Power and Force of invincible Love.*

*This Spirit of Love and Peace is the true Spirit of Christianity ; the spreading of which among Mankind universally, is the ultimate Design and Tendency of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Prince of Peace, who, through every Age of Christianity, has preserved to himself a People publicly professing universal Love and Peace, and abstaining from War and Fighting.*

*Concerning which People, Robert Barclay in the Close of his excellent Apology, after a prophetick manner, speaks thus, " He that hath  
" arisen in a small Remnant, shall arise and  
" go on by the same Arm of Power in his  
" spiritual Manifestation, until he hath conquered all his Enemies, until all the Kingdoms of the Earth become the Kingdom  
" of Christ Jesus."*

*Let this short Preface suffice, to introduce thee to the Perusal of the Letter itself, which, if it shall tend to thy Benefit or Instruction, will answer the End for which it is published.*

*Thy Friend,*

*J. B.*



# A LETTER

Concerning the

## Glory and Excellency

OF THE

Peaceable State of the Kingdom of  
the MESSIAH:

S I R,

I Received yours, which brings me the State of Affairs, then in Agitation, between the Parliament and Army ; you send me what they best approve, and what they dare not own.

No wonder if some good Men are on this *Dilemma* ; many, I know, are almost broken between those Principles (they call) of *Reason*, and those of God.

The first (acknowledging Man to be compounded of two Natures, Earth and Heaven, Light and Darkness,) break the Actions into several Streams, as if of *two*, and not *one* Person.

It

It is our Misery, and the Sadness of our Spirits, that we are held in these Chains of Earth and Darkness, that we are fetter'd in these Prisons of Mortality, and are not free in all Things to act like ourselves, as sprung from a divine Principle, as born of a noble Seed, and putting forth the Strength and Power of the divine Nature, in Actions purely and simply spiritual.

But if this Light shines not on our Spirits in its *Meridian* Glory, let us wait till the Sun rises, let us not walk in the Paths of Darkness, according to the Principle and Spirit of this World: There is a glorious Light in the *East* already, the Mountain Tops begin to discover it.

When I look on the World, and survey the Actions of *Men*, when I consider the Interests and Principles of the most, the fleshly Toilings and Struglings of the Spirits of the World's Reformers, I cannot but see much *Weakness* and *Darkness*, generating poor and spiritless Designs, which rend and tear, and never bind up the Breaches of a Kingdom.

'Tis true, the Body Politick, as you write, was desperately sick, and a desperate Disease must have a desperate Cure; but consider the Nature of the Disease, and then judge of the Means to cure it.

All the Properties of Hell and Darkness, all the Superfluities of Folly and Vanity, all the Mists of Error and Superstition, had form'd themselves into a Body of *Corruption*, and so assaulted and possess'd the vital Parts of *Church* and *State*, seizing the Heart and Spirits of *Government* and *Religion*, that the Soul of both were fled, and there remain'd  
little

little more than a poor Carcass, a painted *Image*, a spiritless *Form*, without any Motion, but artificial and violent.

But tell me, what is the *Physick* to cure this *Lethargy*? Parliament and People, Church and State, Soul and Body, were languishing with this Sickneſs: *A Spirit of Reformation begins to work*; the faint Breathings of the Spirit of Life put some on endeavouring to undertake the Cure.

Some (according to the Spirit that acted them) mix'd Ingredients earthly and carnal (ignorant *Empirics*, who knew not the Nature of the Diſeaſe or Cure;) others ranſack the Bowels of Nature and Reason, ſtudy the Practices and Preſcriptions of the old *Heroes* of the World, the *Heathen* Conquerors and Reformers of Nations, and yet never riſe ſo high, either in Magnanimity or Greatneſs of Spirit, to do Good in their Generations, and command themſelves and others.

Some ſearch deeper, and throw into this Composition ſome Grains of Spirit, and *Quinteffences* of an higher Extract, purify'd and ſublim'd into a nobler Eſſence.

But tell me, is this Mixture like to reſtore Life to a dying and languishing Nation, to a dark and formal Church? Could we get the rareſt Drugs the World affords; could we ſearch the Earth to its Center, and diſcover the occult Qualities of all its Minerals and Wonders; can this reach the Soul and Spirit of one Man, much leſs an whole Kingdom? What, though ſome Grains of Spirit are in one Composition, is it not loaded with thick Clay, overcome by the Predominancy of contrary Qualities?

The



The Distemper of this Nation springs from our living in another World than our own, in a corrupted Air, a contagious Climate, in Vassalage and Slavery to these Bodies of Flesh, to this lower Element of the World, to the Prince of Darkness.

Men, created in the Image of God, have unclothed themselves of that Glory, and now wander in the Shapes of *Wolves* and *Beasts of Prey*; having their Souls and Spirits sprung from Heaven, they transform themselves into the Similitude of the *elementary Creatures*: What are Wars, Confusions and Disorders, but the Actings of this brutish Spirit, in tearing and devouring our *Fellow-Creatures*?

*Fightings and Divisions spring from the jarring, discordant Qualities of the Minds of Men*, who have lost the Spirit of *Sweetness, Union and Peace*, which breaths forth nothing but Love and Joy, and keeps the whole Body in an harmonious Unity.

Is this Unity to be recovered by Divisions? 'Tis true, by such a Division as this it is, by separating Truth from Error, Light from Darkness, the purer from the grosser Parts: This is by a Spirit of Burning, and by a Power above the Strength of Man.

Who must be the Reformers of the World? Who must build the Lord a Temple, a glorious Temple both in Church and State? Not those who are stain'd with Blood, and act by a Spirit of Wrath and Violence:

The Lord tells *David*, 1 Chron. xxii. 8. *Thou hast shed Blood abundantly, and hast made great Wars, thou shalt not build an House to my Name, because thou hast shed much Blood upon the Earth in my Sight.*

Is there no Spirit and Life in these Words ? Was not *David* permitted to build the *material Temple*, a dark Shadow and Type of the Spiritual ? Was he not suffer'd in that Age, under those dark fleshly Administrations, which held forth no greater Light, and put no greater Glory on their Spirits to subdue the World, but by Sword and Bow, by Force and Violence ; and is it probable that the sweet and gentle Spirit of the Gospel should need the Force and Strength of Men ? *These do well, in whose Hearts it is to reform the World, but they mistake the Way ;* they act in the Strength of the Wrath of God, in the Spirit of this World ; their poor Earth will not conquer Hell and Devils, their Swords and Guns will not change the Natures of Men :

No, *Solomon* must build this Temple, the Lord Jesus ; it must be another Spirit, another Generation, another Way. These, with *David*, may fell the Cedars, and hew the Stones of this earthly Building.

*Those ordain'd for this glorious Work, their Swords must be of another Metal ;* to wound and heal again, to destroy the Flesh, and transform it into Spirit ; their Spirits shall breath forth nothing but Love and Sweetness, their Language shall be, *Glory to God on high, on Earth Peace, Goodwill towards Men.*

They call not for *Fire* from *Heaven*, they cast not into Prisons and Dungeons, they plunder not, nor destroy ; they are of Spirits more sweet, more amiable, forcing the World, by a divine Power of Love, to confess they are overcome and vanquish'd.

All the Kingdoms of the Earth, all the Glory of the Creatures, all the Splendor, Magnificence and Pomp of the World shall vanish as Smoak, and acknowledge itself a poor Shadow, an empty Nothing.

All who act in this Spirit of Violence and Fury, are a Rod in the Hand of God, the Executioners of Vengeance : *These are the Horns of the Beasts that shall hate the Whore, and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her Flesh, and burn her with Fire ; in the Cup she hath filled, these shall fill her double ; these pour out the Vials of Wrath upon the Seat of the Beast ; they are the Fowls of Heaven, to eat the Flesh of Kings, and the Flesh of Captains, and great Ones of the Earth ; they are to rend and tear the outward Garments of the World's Glory ; they are an Administration, wherein God cloaths himself with Fury and Indignation.*

By this Spirit of Vengeance and Wrath, all the World's Tormentors have been acted : This has been a Work of *Assyrians and Babylonians, Romans, Turks and Saracens* ; they have overcome the Earth with their Armies, they have trampled Nations under their Feet, and trod their Gods in the Mire of the Streets.

How do many in this Age glory in these Triumphs, set up their poor *Trophies*, their triumphant Pillars, as if the Strength and Glory were their own ?

Had they *Christian Spirits*, they needed not the *Swords of Men* ; they are weak in the Spirit of the Gospel, therefore they cloath themselves with the Power of *Flesh*, and will enter into *Canaan* in the Wrath of the Lord, destroying and devouring, not converting.

*They*



*They glory in fleshly Conquests and Victories*, having not Power in the *Spirit* to conquer in the Way of *Love, Union and Peace*; with these Weapons the Apostles bid Defiance to the whole World, to Hell and Devils; they advanced their Standards on the proud Walls of *Rome* itself.

This fleshly Strength will prove Weakness in this Work; it will die and vanish into Air, when it has done the Work the Lord has appointed.

God makes one Spirit and Property of Darknes afflict and torment another; the Nations of the World will destroy themselves, *every one by the Sword of his Brother*: The Flesh of the Saints engag'd in these Contests, and worldly Quarrels, shall rend itself, and help to rend the World.

But how are they Saints? Such who have some Glimmerings of the *bright and Morning Star*, who by throwing off the external Vail of *antichristian Darknes, fleshly Forms, servile Dependency* on the dark Spirits of blind Men:

I say, having thrown off these Fetter, they have some Liberty, and having remov'd these Mists they see a Light, the faint Reflections of a rising Sun; being let out of their Cage of Darknes, they fly, flutter, and catch at every Thing, and apprehend little as it is in God; but in the Light of their own Spirits, mov'd by the Call and Drawing of the Spirit of God, and the Concurrence of those *Beams of Light* scattered every where; these receive but Glances and Flashes, and cover it with much Darknes, Confusion and Ignorance; yet being rais'd above their former State, they think God speaks in them, and their Knowledge is the Knowledge of the Spirit.

The Good seem to give God the Glory, and make him their *Strength in Battle*, and considering how gloriously they have conquered, are strongly persuaded that the mighty Power of God accompany'd them ; and where God assists and gives Victory, it must be for the Good of Mankind and the World ; and therefore they will improve their Victories to attain that high End.

Thus they make their Progress : *If God assists in Acts of Blood, by Force and Fightings, he does the same in Acts of Force and Violence on the corrupt Governors of the World*, who are running back into Egypt, leaning on the Pillars of the World, setting up their empty, *gilded Idols*, corrupt Forms, and dark Administrations, as the utmost End of all their Endeavours, as the Price of all the Blood shed in the Kingdoms.

Thus being persuaded of the Presence of the Lord, and having in their own Spirits some Height and Strength to Good, some Will and Desire to do Good to the World, they continue their begun Motion, measuring the whole by themselves, the Spirits of others by their own, and so think their whole Body of Assistants fitly qualify'd for the Government of a Kingdom :

Never considering what a *Spirit of Darknes*, *Pride*, *Vain-glory* and *Ambition*, dwells and acts among them ; and how weak meer natural Spirits are, being raised from the Dust to sit upon a Throne, and to bear the Temptations of Power, Honour and worldly Glory.

Consider Actions purely and simply according to their Nature, and the Dispensations of the Gospel.

This

This is a violent, unnatural, fleshly Way for the reforming of the World : *The small Stone must be hewn out without Hands.* This is the Wind rending and tearing the Rocks, before the soft and still Voice was heard. This is the Fire and Earthquake, to burn and shake this earthly Fabrick, the corrupt World and its Glory.

Thus *the Parliament have been Executioners of Vengeance on the King's Party* ; for Judgment a Fire of Wrath is kindled in the Bowels of the Kingdom, setting the Properties of Darkness at Enmity among themselves : *A dark and formal Clergy against a more dark and formal* ; Formality and Hypocrisy against Loosness and Profaneness ; restrained Civility against Riot and Luxury :

The Ministers preach War, Sword and Fire from Heaven, discovering their own Weakness and Inability to act in the Strength of God ; therefore they cry up the Cause of Religion, the Covenant, the Ordinances : These, (tho' under more Light than the other) yet they stir up the Spirits of Men to afflict and torment *Kings, Prelates, Malignants*, and to take away their Honours and Revenues.

Far be it from me to blast the least Appearance of God among them, or to spread a Cloud on those faint Glimmerings which shin'd in their Spirit : It was their Darkness, their Flesh, that made them thus *Excentrick* ; they acted in the Spirit of the World, and of Nature ; their Light was Lightnings from Mount Sinai, not the glorious Light of the Spirit. In this Way they will be like the Billows and Waves of the Sea, one tossing and driving forward the other, till they dash themselves against the Rocks.

The



The *Parliament* and their Armies have broken the *Cavaliers* ; the *Presbytery Episcopacy* ; the *Independents* have restrained the Power of *Presbytery*, for their Pride and Covetousness ; giving them of the Cup they gave others to drink. If the *Independents* corrupt, there are those sprung out of their own Bowels, prepared for their Executioners : These, if they aspire too high, will be levell'd themselves by their great Idol the *People* ; or their Principles will raise a Spirit dwelling in the confused Rabble and Multitude, to break and tear all to pieces, to bring all into an Huddle and Confusion, without Order, Law, or Government.

Thus the Fury of the Lord breaks forth like a burning Fire, against all Corruption in the Powers of the World, against Tyranny and Oppression in all its Forms and Shapes ; tho' its wolfish Spirit is cloath'd with Innocence and Gentleness, the outward Form will not change the Nature.

*Monarchy, Aristocracy, Democracy*, will be much at one, unless the Breath of Life from Heaven quicken their dead and lifeless Carcases.

I fear, in our Contests, we have too much mixed Earth with Heaven ; we have gone a dark, untrodden, obscure Path ; therefore the Lord may justly withdraw that Spirit of Justice and Righteousness which has accompanied, and acted even more worldly *States* and *Republicks*.

They acted in the Flesh ; we pretend to an higher Principle, we speak of Spirit, Power and divine Light ; their Motions were natural, according to their Natures, being of the Earth, earthly ; ours irregular, excentrick, unnatural, being we think  
ourselves

ourselves heavenly, live in the Air of the Gospel, in the Light of the Spirit, which points out a more glorious Way : Therefore it is but just with God, if we sow the Wind to reap the Whirlwind. But what will be the End of all ?

*When we have proved our Strength to be Weakness, when one Overturning shall be succeeded by another, that glorious Power shall manifest it, whose Right it is alone to reign ; when we have passed thorough a Wilderness, the Lord will bring us into the Land of Rest, so long breathed after and desired, the Lord will bring Order out of Confusion, Light out of Darkness, Peace out of War and Troubles.*

This will as surely be, as the Spring now succeeds the Winter, the Day the Night ; who the Lord may make most glorious in this Work, is known to himself : It magnifies his Power and Goodness, if he breathes Life in those dead Bones we trample upon, if he quickens those we have reprobated, and rejected as withered Branches, and vile Excrements.

*He can make the first last, and the last first ; he can bring down the proud Spirit of a Nebuchadnezzar, and force him to glorify the God of Heaven.*

Let every Man therefore keep his Station ; let the People of God shine like themselves, that it may appear they are sent into the World to do Good to it, and to reflect the Image and Glory of God.

Those who are Magistrates, let them put forth the Spirits of *Christians*, let their Actions be convincing, let not the World justly brand them for corrupt,

corrupt, unjust, Self-Advancers, and Raisers of their Families, rather than Restorers of the Ruins of a Kingdom : If the Floods of Darkness roar against them, if a Deluge of Confusion overflows them, if the Flames of Division break out again, let them be confident they are above Danger in another Region, where no Cloud can reach them, no Confusion disturb them ; and if their Earth lies here, their Bodies of Dust, yet shall they dwell securely in these Burnings, and be at Peace in the Midst of these Flames.

Thus, *Sir*, I have given you my Thoughts of the Times, my earnest Desire is, that Things may prove otherwise than I write, in Relation to those in Power ; the Lord, if it be his Will, make their Actions glorious, and over-rule that Spirit of Perverseness and Darkness, mingling itself with their Counsels :

But if they fail, the Lord will do the Work ; let us build on this as on a Rock, it is fixed and immoveable.

*Sir*, excuse me, I have been too tedious, impute it to the Subject I write, which affords Matter for a Volume ; I have this Confidence in you, that nothing will be unwelcome to you from a Friend, or a *Christian*, or him who really is

*Your Kinsman and Servant in every Relation,*



H. B.



